

When Christian's are in Willful Sin, Part 5 - 1 Corinthians 5:12-13 – November 16th, 2014

- Today's teaching will be part five of a series I've titled, "When Christian's are in Willful Sin."
- We'll finish chapter five today but we're not finished with the Apostle Paul's rebuke of these carnal Christians there in the Corinthian church.
- Here at the end of chapter five, Paul will clarify, in no uncertain terms, a matter that has been the source of much confusion for Christians.
- What I'm speaking of is the touchy topic of judging others. To me, this is one of the most misunderstood principles in Christendom today.
- Thankfully, God's Word is not silent concerning our judging of others, particularly here in the text that we have open before us this morning.
- Actually, up to this point, Paul has shown us several ways to deal with professing Christian's who are living in willful and unrepentant sin.

1. Confront Them (Verses 1-2)

2. Remove Them (Verses 3-5)

3. Rid yourself of them (Verses 6-8)

4. Do not associate with them (Verses 9-11)

5. Judge them (Verses 12-13)

12 What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? 13 God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked person from among you."

- v12 Paul asks them what business is it of his to have to judge those outside the church rather, are they not to judge those inside the church.
- v13 He goes on to say that God will judge those outside the church, and as such, they are to Expel the wicked person from among them.
- It's important to notice, first and foremost, how that Paul is making another distinction between professing Christians and non-Christians.

- He was careful to make this same distinction in verses 9-11, where he says that they're not to associate or eat with unrepentant Christians.
- However, he was also careful to clarify that they were to associate with non-Christians, for what should be deemed as obvious reasons.
- In other words, when it comes to associating and judging, our posture should be different for the professing Christian and the non-Christian.

- More specifically, we're to judge the professing Christian, but not the non-Christian, this because, God alone will judge them instead of us.

- Conversely, we are not to associate with the professing Christian in willful sin, but we are to be salt and light to those outside the church.
- Case in point; notice the conspicuous absence of any judging of the stepmother, with whom this unnamed man was committing fornication.

- Were she in the church as a professing Christian, then not only would Paul say they were to judge her, but that they were to expel her too.
- Here's where I'm going with this, often times we as Christians in the church, will find ourselves doing the exact opposite of what we're to do.
- By that I mean we judge the world not ourselves, such that, the church will judge the wicked culture of the day, and turn a blind eye to itself.

- Kindly allow me to share with you two of the biggest reasons why doing this is so dangerous and destructive to Christian's and the church.

- The first reason that not judging sin and expelling those in willful and unrepentant sin is so dangerous is it can destroy the whole church.
- There's a textbook example of this with a man by the name of Achan, found in the seventh chapter of the Old Testament book of Joshua.

- This Achan willfully disobeyed God's command to not take any of the spoil from Jericho because those things were demonically cursed.

- As such, he had brought a curse upon the entire camp by virtue of his sin having the potential to infect the congregation of the Israelites.
- It's for this reason we're told how that the anger of the Lord had burned against the children of Israel, all because of one man's willful sin.

Charles Spurgeon of this wrote, "The chapter opens with a 'but,' and a very serious 'but' it was. One man in Israel had presumed to violate the express command of Jehovah, and had taken of the spoil of Jericho for himself, and had thus defied the curse, which had been pronounced upon any who so acted. That one man's sin, like a single drop of a potent poison, was sufficient to do damage to the whole body of Israel. Sin is so deadly an evil that the smallest measure of it may do more injury than we can reckon or imagine."

- This is why God had to expose Achan's sin. If He didn't the congregation of the Israelites would never have moved into the Promised Land.
- So too is this true for us as a congregation, if there's sin in the camp, as it were, it can actually hinder us from moving forward as a church.
- I'll take it a step further and suggest willful disobedience, and hidden sin can render a church, a family, and even an individual powerless.

Again, Charles Spurgeon of this, says it best this way, "Sin will deprive a church of all power to do good. Though it may be an unknown sin, its effects will soon be visible enough. It is a blessed thing when affliction leads to humbling, and humbling to heart searching. Lord, grant that no sin may be in this family either open or concealed, but make and keep us obedient to thy will evermore."

- The second reason that not judging sin and expelling those in willful and unrepentant sin is so dangerous is it can destroy the individual.
- I find it interesting that Paul makes another distinction as it relates to this man being expelled from the church and handed over to Satan.
- Namely, it's for the destruction of his flesh and not the destruction of his soul, in that his flesh had to be destroyed for his soul to be saved.

2 Corinthians 2:3-11 (NIV) 3 I wrote as I did, so that when I came I would not be distressed by those who should have made me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy. 4 For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you. 5 If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you to some extent—not to put it too severely. 6 The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient. 7 Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. 9 Another reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. 10 Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, 11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

- In closing let me simply say that one need look no further than to unrepentant and willful sin as the reason my life is hindered and defeated.
- Moreover, it would behoove me to take heed to judge myself and repent of my willful sin before God outs me by having my sin find me out.